

Green Matters

DPW Environmental Division

Environmental Natural Resources Management

Fort Gordon, Ga.



Environmental Outreach Program

DPW Environmental Division conducts and participates in outreach activities through-out the year. To name a few: Earth Day, Fort Gordon Stand-up Safety Day and Fort Gordon and CSRA Community school events.

Static displays and live animal species exhibits are available for public viewing and interaction. The displays and exhibits consist of environmental education demonstrations and materials, live species of snakes found on Fort Gordon, Indian arrowheads, RCW inserts, animal skulls and other natural and cultural finds from the installation. Educational displays focus on environmental sustainability, natural and cultural resources and environmental careers. The Outreach Program reaches over 2000 people per year.



The purpose of Environmental Outreach Program is to educate the public on environmental stewardship and impacts in their communities.



We also sponsored the Bird of Prey Demonstration Presented by Georgia Southern in partnership with DFWMR for Earth Day.



Inside this issue:

Eco Friendly Car Brakes	2
Encounters with Wildlife - Do's & Don'ts	3
Safety Around Electricity	4

Upcoming Training and Events

- ◇ 15-24 Jun Annual Environmental Performance Assessment, Installation Wide
- ◇ 16 Jun Stormwater Industrial training, 0900-1100, Bldg 11307
- ◇ 13 July 3rd QTR FY16 EQCC Meeting, 1230-1330, Darling Hall, GC conf.
- ◇ 13 July Hazardous Waste Refresher 0830 & 0945

Improve Water Quality by Installing “Green” Car Brakes

California, along with Washington State, is taking steps to decrease stormwater pollution by putting the “brakes” on car brake pads. If you didn't already know, brake pads have been made of some pretty toxic stuff that can harm the environment. Meredith Williams with the California Department of Toxics Substances Control stated “Every time we brake, a little bit of dust is generated from our brake pads, so whatever is in the brake pad ends up on our roads.” Brake dust is loaded with copper. Once it rains, the dust on the roads gets washed into the stormdrains, which leads to creeks, rivers and other bodies of water.

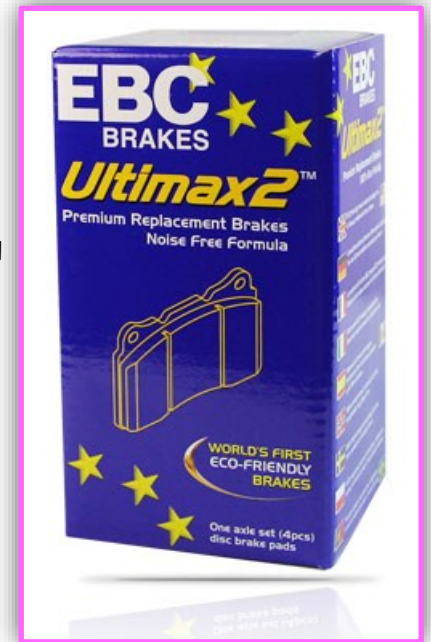


Copper is harmful to aquatic species. In the 1990s in the Bay Area of California, “Parts of the bay couldn't even be fished. The fish were so full of copper that they were not fit for human consumption,” stated Larry Moore, auto shop owner of Mountain View. It wasn't until a group of auto mechanics discovered that the copper from auto brake pads was the culprit. Brake pad producers keep their formulas secret, but experienced mechanics knew just what to look for since the copper was visible.

Once the culprit was suspected to be copper contained in brake pads, a team of stormwater treatment agencies, environmental groups and brake manufacturers put their heads together to investigate the dilemma in the Bay Area. The end result was that laws were passed in 2010 by California and Washington State to diminish the use of copper and other heavy metals in brake pads over a 15 year period. What's even better is that some manufacturers didn't wait around to get busy. “Forty percent of the brakes on the market comply with the goals that were set for the year 2025,” stated Williams. Brake companies were allowed to continue to sell their old supply of brake pads, but by 2014 they must comply with almost no asbestos, cadmium, chromium, lead or mercury. By 2021, brake pads must contain less than 5 percent copper and less than .5 percent by 2025. According to Larry's Autoworks in Mountain View, these brakes are available for most all cars now and cost about the same with great performance.

California law is trying to make it mandatory for brake pads to have low copper levels.. Individual drivers aren't liable for not having them, but it would definitely help to get the word out and speed things up. Once the public is aware of this they can start asking for these eco-friendly brakes to be installed on their vehicles.

The EPA calculates that California has seen a 61 percent drop in urban runoff since the changes in the brake pad make-up. So next time you have your brake pads changed, ask your mechanic about these eco-friendly brake pads and help keep the pollution out of our rivers and streams. Prevention starts with YOU.



Encounters With Wildlife...Do's and Don'ts

Now that the weather is warmer, critters are on the move. From snakes to opossums, if you work outside or play outdoors you are bound to cross paths with them. For the most part, you will encounter them in the outdoors- in their natural habitat, but on occasion you may stumble upon them in your home. Animals like to curl up in dark, cool places such as crawl spaces to escape the heat, or in attics to nest and get warm in the cold months. Squirrels and bats like the attics. Whatever the case, indoors or out, you should follow certain "Dos" and "Don'ts" with such encounters to avoid injury to you and the wildlife.

Reptiles-Back Up!

Don't pick up snakes! Most people can not identify snakes correctly and tell the venomous from the non-venomous. "Eight out of 10 people who call us (Snake Catchers) incorrectly identify the snakes in their yard, according to Russell Cavender, a professional critter catcher who owns the "The Snake Catchers", a nuisance wildlife control business in South Carolina.



The Snake Chasers
Photo by Matt Silfer

Listen up above.

Pay attention to noises coming from your attic. If you hear rumbling overhead or pitter patter of little feet, get it checked out ASAP. The longer you wait the more damage they can do. To discourage attic guest such as squirrels, trim branches hanging close to the roof back. A 9-12 foot clearance is ideal. Squirrels are great jumpers and can jump 8 foot from tree to roof top. Raccoons are also resourceful creatures and can climb and gnaw their way in as well.

Daytime Roamers

Don't be alarmed if you see a fox, raccoon or other nocturnal critter out during the broad daylight. This doesn't always mean they are ill or rabid. Females typically adjust their feeding schedules for the daytime hours so they can protect their young at night. Just let them be.



Photo by Matt Silfer

Leave them BEE.

Swarms of honeybees can be seen in the spring. Cavender states that "it can be terrifying to see a huge collection of buzzing bees hanging from a limb or attached to a tree trunk or mailbox, but it's a good thing. Honeybees are vital to our planet's survival." They are not hostile when they hover and migrate to new "homes". Don't bother them so they can keep "beezy".

Ward off Snakes

Don't make it easy for snakes to camp out in your yard. Get rid of mulch, pine straw and other natural compositions for landscaping. Opt for gravel or rock. Watch your step. Wood piles, collected debris, and discarded junk piles are great hiding places for serpents. Avoid having these to keep the snakes at bay.



Russell Cavender, "The Snake Catchers"
Photo by Milton Morris

DPW
15th Street
Building 14600

Phone: 706-791-2526

E-mail: usarmy.gordon.imcom.mbx.dpw-enrmo@mail.mil



Like us on Facebook! **Fort Gordon
Green Matters**

Sources

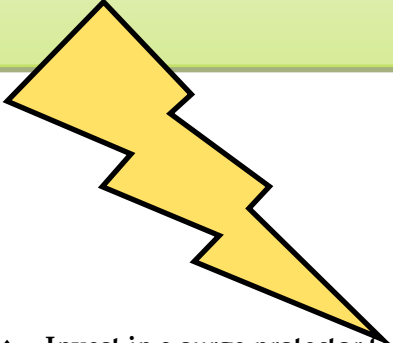
SC living magazine, Jan A. Igoe <http://scliving.coop/sc-life/sc-life-features/wild-wild-life/> (Photo by Milton Morris Photo by Matt Silfer\)

SC Living magazine, May 2016, *May is National Electrical Safety Month*

<http://abc7news.com/1287063/>

<http://www.alliantenergykids.com/PlayingItSafe/ElectricSafety/000552>

Safety Around Electricity

- 
- ◆ Invest in a surge protector for your cable and telephone jacks. This helps protect your computer, TV, and phone in case of a power surge.
 - ◆ If there is a downed powerline in your area- DON'T touch anything or any person contacting it. Stay a safe distance away.
 - ◆ Maintain your smoke detectors in your home by checking/changing the batteries monthly.
 - ◆ If you have to use extension cords in your home, never put them in highly traveled pathways. They can be a tripping hazard.
 - ◆ When cooking in the kitchen, always remember to double check and make sure all stove appliances have been turned off.
 - ◆ Keep lamps away from flammable materials and on a level surface.
 - ◆ Never use frayed or damaged extension cords. Exposed wires are a fire hazard and shock hazard.
 - ◆ Never yank electrical cords from the wall sockets.
 - ◆ If you encounter an electrical fire, be sure to use a chemical fire extinguisher. Never use water.
 - ◆ Make sure outdoor electrical outlets are covered, to prevent splashing water from entering. Keep electrical devices and cords away from water.
 - ◆ Kids should avoid climbing trees near power lines.